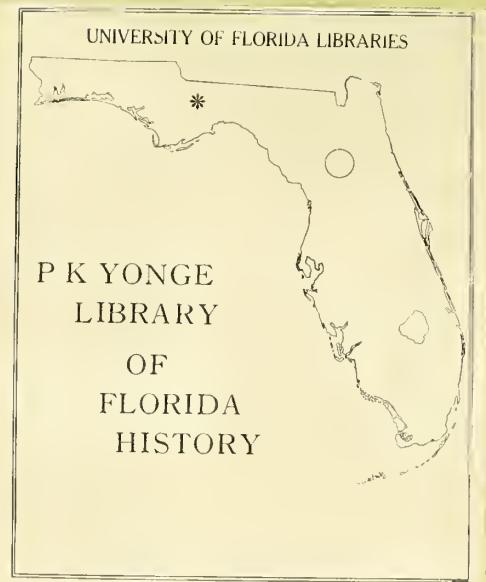


Southern Colonial Trails -  
Florida

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W956s



*Florida - Trail book*  
SOUTHERN COLONIAL TRAILS

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CONTEMPLATED TOPICS IN BOOK

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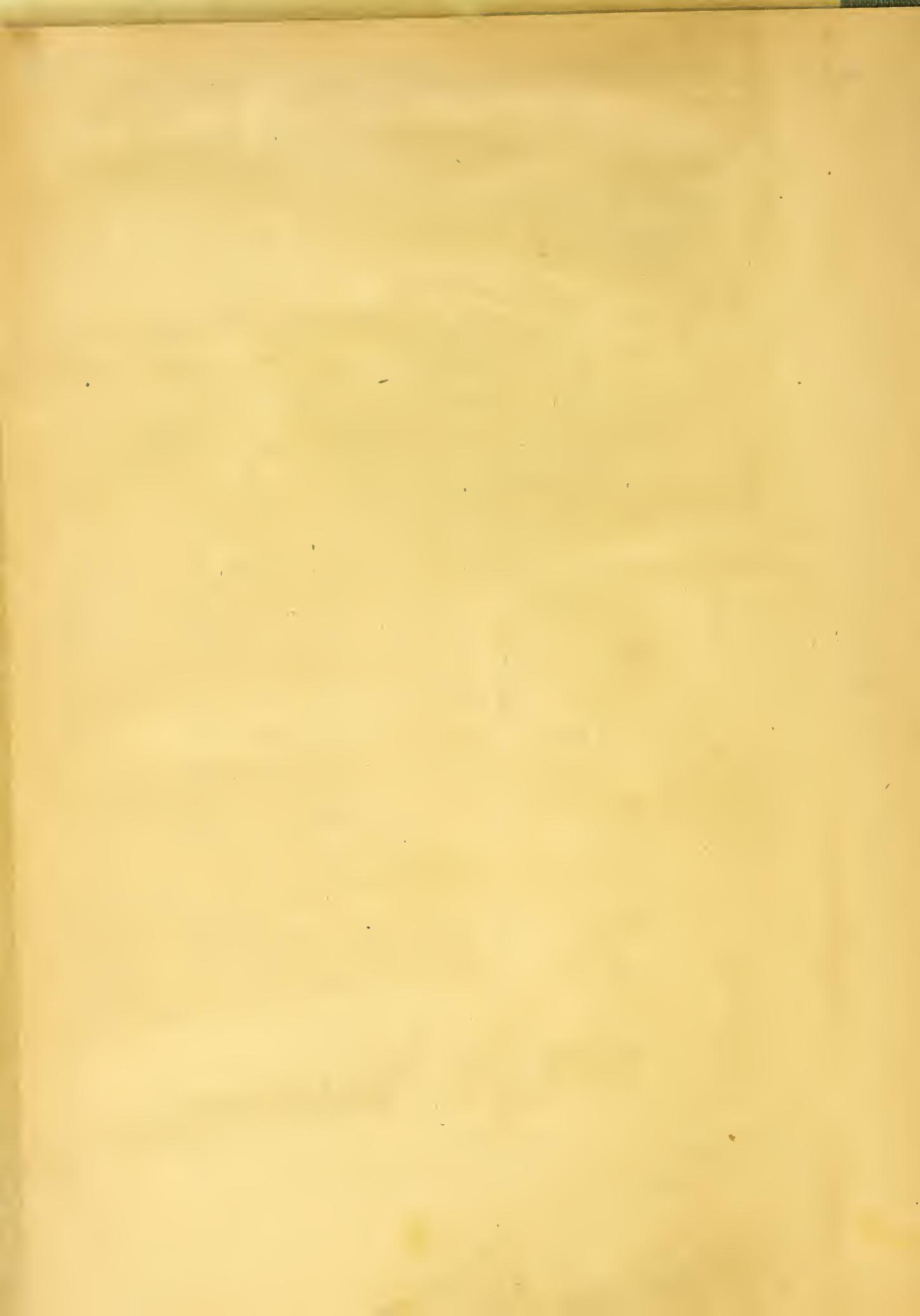
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## RIVAL SOUTHERN TRAILS

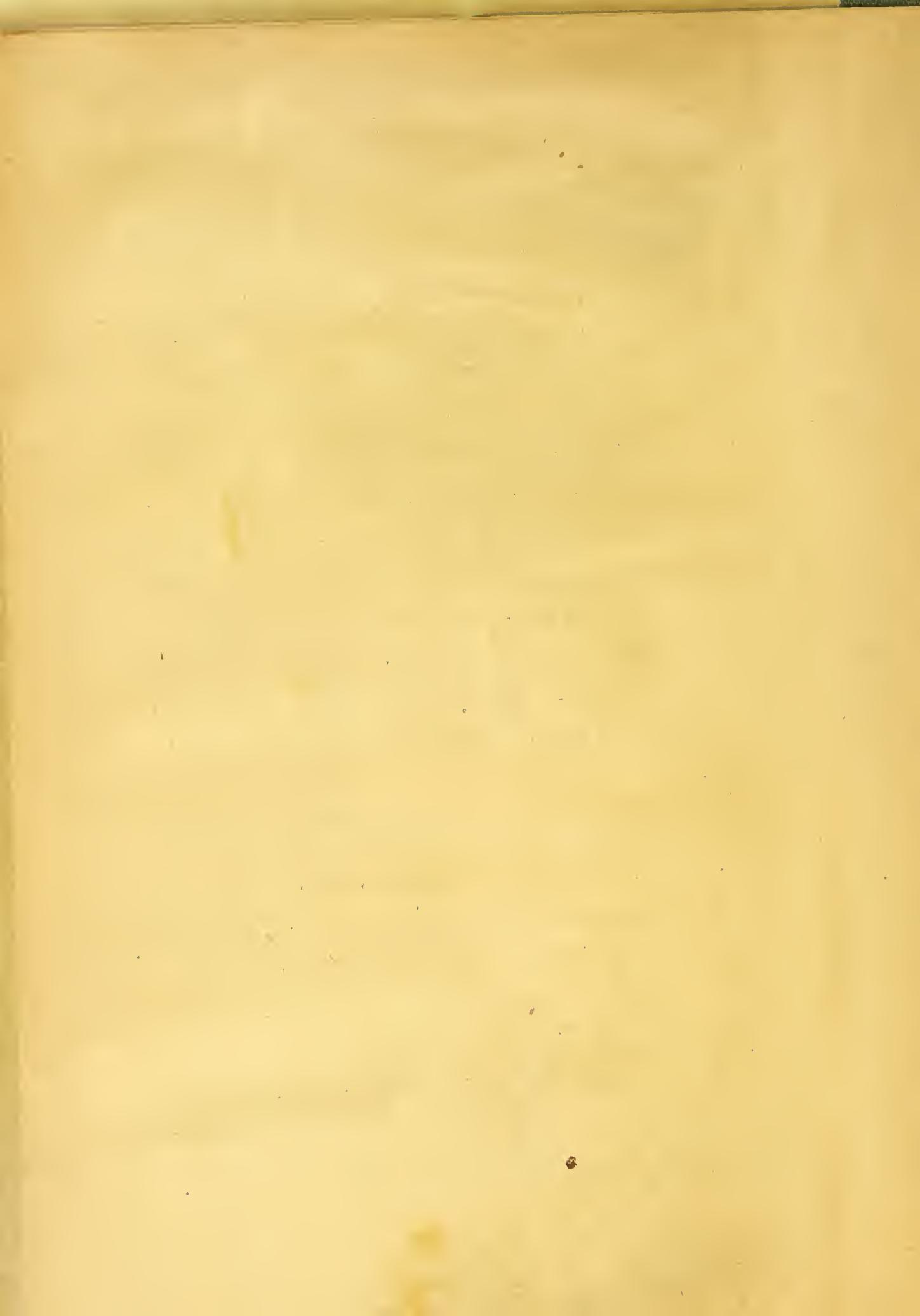
### Indian Trails

Early maps and letters of traders indicate that from a period long prior to the coming of the whites the Indian was familiar with places often hundreds of miles distant, one from another, and that they used the same route in coming and going. The native trader was inclined to follow the water courses, unloading his boat to pass obstructions and transporting the canoe and its cargo over short distances, called portages or carries between different waters. Supplemental, however, to these open and in times of war obviously dangerous routes, were paths or trails, many of them originally made by the tracks of deer or buffalo in their season migrations between feeding grounds or in search of water or salt licks. The constant passing over the same path year after year, often packed the soil in places so that especially on hillsides, the paths were long traceable by depressions in the ground or by the absence of or the difference in vegetation. "It has frequently been noted that the buffalo trails and the paths of the Indian traders, which often followed the buffalo routes, were laid out with such good judgement that the lines of modern railways connecting the same strategic points have in many cases nearly coincided with them. Intervening between the primitive era and the railroad epoch, the wagon roads leading from the trading points to the interior also tended to follow the routes of the Indian trader.<sup>1</sup>" Travel over such a road was described by a Louisiana missionary, Paul du Ru, in 1700 who wrote, "April 27th we left Pointe a' Mousquet



early in the morning. We said mass at the head of Bay of St. Louis-- We dined there and then took to the road--it is easy to go through the woods and by the roads which are a little broken through here. A league and a half on the way, we found a river as broad as the Marne. Our people tied several logs together and ferried over all their provisions first--Along all the coast one meets very frequently such obstacles as creeks and marshes. We are well satisfied when the water is not higher than our waists. Apr. 28th--There is a consolation in our misfortunes; one of our men had just killed a deer. Another consolation even more substantial; we have discovered a herd of buffalo and our men are practically surrounding them. Good Heavens, what shooting. There must be at least six or seven buffalo down. I ran toward the shooting and found two dying buffalo.<sup>2</sup> Hence in many instances distant points were connected by trails or traces, the latter word adopted from the early French maps.

In 1674 Marquette met Indians along the Mississippi who traded with the Spaniards in Florida. "They had guns, hatchets, hoes, knives, beads, and flasks of double glass, in which they put their powder. They assured us that we were no more than ten days' journey from the sea, that they bought cloth and all other goods from the Europeans who lived to the east, that these Europeans had rosaries and pictures, that they played upon instruments and that some of them looked like me." A map of 1684, in the manuscript collection of Jesuit Relations shows a path from Lake Erie to Florida, with the inscription in French, "Road by which the



Indians went to trade with the Spaniards." The Indians were capable of drawing maps from which favored pioneers secured valuable information about great stretches of country and the roads that traversed them.

John Lawson in the account of his travels in Carolina says, "The Indians will draw maps very exactly of all the rivers, towns, mountains, and roads or what you shall inquire of them, which you may draw by their directions and come to a small matter of latitude, reckoning by their day's journey. These maps they will draw in the ashes of a fire, and sometimes upon a mat or piece of bark. I have put pen and ink into a savage hand and he has drawn me the rivers, bays, and other parts of a country, which afterwards I have found to agree with a great deal of nicety. But you must be very much in their favor, otherwise they will never make these discoveries to you, especially, if it be in their own quarters.<sup>3</sup>

The Eastern trails seldom exceeded 18 inches in width, yet these were the ordinary roads of the country traveled by hunters, migrating bands, traders, embassies, and war parties. So long as the trails led through friendly territory, they followed the lines of least natural resistance, but rivers did not prevent overland travel or trade. A native boat, the cajeaux, was used to ferry over deep streams. In 1721 Le Page wrote "The cageaux were made of cane tied together, then crossed double; they were used to cross rivers, as they could be made in a very short time." Another method of crossing was by leather boats, according to James Adair, Indian trader of 1775.<sup>3a</sup> "Skins are used for boats. The



hide is stretched upon the ground, and two stout sticks placed crosswise upon it; and the edges being loop holed, a cord is passed round it; by which, the sides are drawn up to the necessary height--the sticks keeping it sufficiently extended to receive the passenger. A cord is then attached to one end, which the guide takes in his mouth, and swims across, drawing the traveller after him. I passed several streams in this way, without accident, having always had the luck to get over in a whole skin. I was, however, I must confess, always very glad to land; and am inclined to think, that the phrase of jumping out of the skin for joy, must originated with some traveller, who chanced to be conveyed in this way."

It is true the trader was inclined to follow the water routes. However, in times of war these routes were dangerous because the channel of a stream often carried the travelers close to the shore, thus exposing persons on boats or rafts to attacks of enemies concealed on wooded banks. Even in peaceful times streams had their drawbacks, owing to snags, freshets or dry seasons when the water became very low. Thus while travel over long distances was not as frequent as that between adjacent villages, it was possible from earliest times to cross the continent by means of a series of intercommunicating paths. Other things being equal, the trail was not laid out along rough, stony ground because of the rapid wearing away of footgear; nor through green briar, nor dense brush, nor laurel or other thickets, because of the difficulty of making rapid progress. These trails were generally along high ground, where the soil dries quickly, where the underbrush was least dense, where the fewest and shallowest streams were to be crossed; and on journeys where



mountains were encountered the paths, with few exceptions, followed the lowest points, or gaps, in many of which stone piles are still found. In the extreme Southwest these stone heaps have resulted from the habit of Indians casting a stone when approaching a steep, ascent, in order, they say, to prevent them from becoming fatigued. Another Indian habit in following trails was the convention of camping only on the right side. This was to leave the left side for unappeased ghosts of dead Indians, who could not rest until their death was avenged.

While in the East trails consisted of foot paths, those of the plains in later times at least were wide roads beaten down by large parties passing with horses, dragging tipi poles and travoises. These trails were well marked, often being depressed two feet below the surface, the difference in vegetable growth along them showing distinctly for many years where the paths had been. In the Southwest there were long trails, by which the Hopi and Pueblo Indians traveled to and from the sources of supply of salt from Colorado and elsewhere; long journeys were also made to obtain supplies of shells or turquoise for ornaments, clay for pottery or stone to answer the requirements of trade or domestic use. The Western Indians traveled hundreds of miles to obtain blankets from the Pueblo, and some of the Plains Indians are known to have traveled 2,000 miles on raids. The white man, whether hunter, trader, or settler, blazed the trees along the Indian trails in order that seasonal changes might not mislead him should he return. These trails of the Indians, first followed by trappers, were later used by the missionary, the hunter, the soldier, and the colonist in their conquest of the wilderness.



What with trade carried on by wandering peddlers, such as Cabeca de Vaca described himself to have been, and by the roving tribes such as Apache and other prairie Indians, returning frequently to the same pueblos, and the trade between the Pueblos themselves; what with annual hunting expeditions of the semi-sedentary tribes, of the last prolonged sometimes for weeks and even months, their extended war expeditions and the necessary and unavoidable intercourse with neighboring settlements, trails must have served as means of intercommunication. The trails led from river to river, crossing at some well-known ford, threading the mountain passes, leading over the plain past some unfailing spring or into a protected camping ground. These were the paths followed by Narvaez and De Vaca, by De Soto and De Luna, by Fary Marcos and Coronado, as they advanced over the country, passing in a day's journey from one village to another under the conduct of native guides. It is noticeable that there were no roads, and it may well be assumed in consequence, that after their first experiences in mountain and plain the explorers quickly learned to distinguish the indications of an Indian trail and to take advantage of it. Two remarkable instances of the extent of these trails are furnished by the crossing of the continent from east to west, which Cabeca de Vaca achieved with the aid of his Indian guides (in 1528 to 1536), who unquestionably followed trails known to them, and David Ingram's no less surprising exploit in making his way with his two companions from the Gulf of Mexico to Maine (in 1566-69).



## SPANISH ROADS

The first motive for exploration of North America was the search for a strait leading to the Orient. After seeking in vain for such a waterway along the coast of South America, adventurers turned north, led by tales of a vast shoreline extending in that direction. An added incentive to their search was the report among the West Indian natives that in the interior of a large island called Bimini there was a spring whose waters had the power of restoring youth to those who bathed in them. Ponce de Leon was the adventurer who finally received official sanction for exploration and settlement of this new region, which he reached in 1513. Ponce thought he had discovered a large island but in 1519 Alonzo Alvarez de Pineda sailed from the southern tip of Florida to Tampico, Mexico, and from him the Spaniards learned that their two known possessions in North America, Florida and Mexico, were joined by a continuous coast line.<sup>4</sup>

Nine years later a military expedition under Pamfilio de Narvaez set out to conquer the vast new territory which Pineda had reported. Discouraged by the time they traversed the Florida peninsula, they built crude rafts and tried to follow the coast to Mexico, but were wrecked on the Texas coast near Galveston and all but four men perished. These four, Cabeca de Vaca, Alonzo Maldonado, Andres Dorantes, and Dorantes's black slave, Estevanico, made their way along the Texas coast, then struck inland and eventually reached the Gulf of California.<sup>5</sup>

At first, Cabeca and his companions suffered great hardships as



slaves of the Indians but gradually achieved a reputation as traders and medicine men. When they finally met other Spaniards at the Gulf of California they had an escort of hundreds of Indians to do their bidding.

Back in Mexico Cabeca's stories of the country explored started Coronado searching for the turquoise studded "Seven Cities of Cibola," in New

Mexico and Arizona, and fired the millionaire De Soto with an illusion that led him for seven years through the central United States in search of realms of oriental splendor. De Soto's secretary, Ranjel, made frequent mention of the character of the roads the expedition traversed. In

Florida, as he approached the vaunted town of Ocali he said the "roads

were so broad he thought he already had his hand on the spoil."<sup>6</sup> Considering

that De Soto was hoping to find cities such as he had seen in Peru,

this road must have been of considerable dimensions. Failure and disillusionment were the results of these ventures and from them the Spaniards

derived a bad opinion of North America. So they piled their treasure

fleets with fabulous loot in gold and jewels from Mexico and South America

and sailed to Spain following without a stop the coasts of the Gulf of

Mexico and the Atlantic as far as Virginia before crossing to Spain.<sup>7</sup> But

another nation greedy for a share of the stolen treasure, saw a use for

these savage shores. France planned to establish forts here from which

her soldiers and sailors might sally forth for a share of the gold which

was making Spain the richest and most powerful country in Europe. News

of this spurred Don Luis de Velasco, the viceroy of New Spain, to send

Tristan de Luna with 500 soldiers, 1000 serving people and 240 horses to

the west coast of Florida where he established a settlement on Pensacola

Bay, named by him Bahia Filipina del Puerto de Santa Maria. To supply



this large colony with food, it was planned to drive herds overland from Mexico. The base at Pensacola was to be only a step toward the main objective, a colony at Santa Elena on the Atlantic coast near the present Beaufort.<sup>8</sup> No sooner had the Spaniards landed at Pensacola than a hurricane destroyed their stores and ships, a disaster from which the enterprise never recovered. In the face of great handicap, however, De Luna pushed inland to found a colony at Coosa in northern Alabama, but his people rebelled and Velasco sent Angel de Villafane to take charge. Villafane abandoned the idea of going overland to Santa Elena and sailed around the cape of Florida finally reaching Santa Elena, failed to find a suitable harbor for his ships and returned to Cuba.

Scarcely had Villafane departed when in 1562 Jean Ribaut, an officer of the Royal French navy arrived at Santa Elena and built a small fort, leaving 30 men to hold it until he could return with reinforcements. Here he left a stone column with the arms of France.<sup>9</sup> Political upheavals delayed his return and his soldiers abandoned the fort just in time to escape a Spanish coast patrol from Havana which found the column and sent it to Spain in proof of French pretensions.<sup>10</sup> The most ambitious of these French efforts was launched at Fort Caroline, built in 1564 near the mouth of the St. Johns River. One of the first inquiries made of the Indians by Laudonnier the French commander here was "Which is the road to Cibola?" the fabulous land of rich cities also sought by Coronado in the West. The Indians seemed to indicate that such a region lay northwest of them, so Laudonnier shaped his policy to make treaties with those tribes



whose lands lay along such a route. Le Moyne, the French artist and cartographer of the expedition, described the trails and towns of this early native country. Said he, "The Indians are accustomed to build their fortified towns as follows: A position is selected near the channel of some swift stream. They level it as even as possible, and then dig a ditch in a circle around the site, in which they set thick round poles, close together, in twice the height of a man; and they carry this paling some ways past the beginning of it, spiral-wise, to make a narrow entrance admitting not more than two persons abreast. The course of the stream is also diverted to this entrance, and at each end of it they are accustomed to erect a small round building, each full of cracks and holes, and built, considering their means, with much elegance. In these they station as sentinels men who can smell the traces of an enemy at a great distance, and who, as soon as they perceive such traces, set off to discover them. As soon as they find them, they set up a cry which summons those within the town to the defence, armed with bows and arrows and clubs. The chief's dwelling stands in the middle of the town, and is partly underground, in consequence of the sun's heat. Around this are the houses of the principal men, all lightly roofed with palm-branches, as they are occupied only nine months in the year; the other three, as has been related, being spent in the woods. When they come back, they occupy their houses again, and, if they find that the enemy has burnt them down, they build others of similar materials.<sup>11</sup>

Going on the war path meant literally what it said. "A chief who



declared war against his enemy does not send a herald to do it, but orders some arrows, having locks of hair fastened at the notches, to be stuck up along the public ways; as we observe when, after taking the chief Outina prisoner, we carried him around to the towns under his authority, to make them furnish us provisions.<sup>12</sup>

A year after Fort Caroline was built, Laudonnier's plans were rudely upset by Pedro Menendez, commander of a Spanish squadron, who was sent to oust the French and establish forts along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts thus preventing further such inroads on Spain's claims to this vast land. Though she did not herself think North America valuable enough to settle, she was unwilling to allow other Europeans to plant bases there, from which they might threaten the Treasure Fleets.

Menendez destroyed Fort Caroline in summary fashion. Some survivors reached France and according to Herbert Bolton, Hispanic authority, "one lone man, like a belated Cabeca de Vaca made his way across the country from tribe to tribe and came out at Pamico" (on the Gulf coast of Mexico.) Thus for a second time it was demonstrated to Europeans that overland travel between Florida and Mexico was possible.<sup>13</sup> Two hundred years later another lone adventurer crossed the continent according to a letter of Cadillac, French Governor of Louisiana, dated October 26 1713. "There is a Canadian here, who has been in New Spain and Mexico. He also, as well as a man named Richard, assured me that a Spaniard from Pensacola when returning by land to New (Vera) Cruz had found a very productive silver mine near the sea and had informed the viceroy about it, who after



having had it examined had that man put in a tower,--in which he is to finish his life in order that he might not be able to point out the place.<sup>13a</sup> Menendez proceeded energetically to build forts to guard the coast, his main base being at St. Augustine. He made plans to open communications with the Spanish settlements in Mexico. He thought his Florida settlements were near enough to the silver mines in Mexico to serve as a port of shipment in place of Vera Cruz.<sup>14</sup> By using an overland route to the Atlantic coast he hoped to avoid the dangers of shipwreck which the Treasure Fleets often suffered on their journey through the Florida straits. He ordered Captain Juan Pardo to take 150 men "to discover the road and conquer the country from there to Mexico." Pardo marched westward, establishing several small forts in what is now Georgia, but hostile Indians forced him back.

After French failures on the Atlantic coast, the great French explorer and colonizer, Robert Cavelier, commonly known as La Salle, received permission from the King of France to build a fort at the mouth of the Mississippi River. Passing the great river La Salle planted his colony at Matagora Bay in 1635, but desertion and mutiny caused his death and failure of the venture. News of the French colony again created a great stir in the Spanish colonial world and nine expeditions were sent to search for it. Not until four years later did one of these parties under Captain Alonzo de Leon, marching overland from Mexico, find the ruins of the French fort. While there, a priest of this party made friends with the Texas tribesmen and promised them missionaries, and so in 1690 the



first Texas settlement, San Francisco de Los Tejas was established, between the Trinity and Neches Rivers near the present town of Crockett. Little progress was made here, however, and the mission was abandoned after three years.

Hearing that plans were underway in France for another colony on the Gulf coast a royal Spanish decree was issued calling for a fort at Pensacola. A land party from Fort San Luis de Apalache reached Pensacola Bay in 1693,<sup>15</sup> but it was November 1698 before the fort was built. The following January the long dreaded French expedition arrived, too late to seize Pensacola. However, they sailed on west and established posts at Biloxi, Natchez, and Mobile. But these forts were not built to prey on the Spanish Treasure Fleets--they were to support the great network of French trade with the Indians. Moreover Spain and France became friends after 1700 when Philip, young grandson of Louis XIV of France, became king of Spain. During the early years of his reign the French ambassador became virtually Spain's Prime Minister. Friendly relations were built up through the efforts of Luis Joheran de St. Denis, a Frenchman who first went, in 1785 from Mobile to Mexico to establish trade relations with the Spaniards. It is notable that this entire journey was made overland. He set out from Mobile and traveled northwesterly to the Choctaw villages. From there he traveled westward to the village of a tribe called "Nache," a name which soon after was bestowed on the French town of Nachez. Turning southwest he crossed the Mississippi River and reached the Nachitoche tribe. Later he founded here the town of Nacnitoches. He proceeded through Texas



and arrived at a Spanish fort below the Rio Grande where Capt. Ramon was in command. Regarding the overland route St. Denis reported "The distance by land from Mobile to the Presidio of Capt Ramon is only 260 leagues." The combined land and water route was 320 leagues, he said. Moreover food was to be found in abundance going by land. "The land is covered with buffalo, turkeys and wild fruits, thus the trip is made less costly," he concluded.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that in 1713 a Spanish priest in Mexico, Fray Hidalgo, sent a letter to the French by an Indian carrier which finally reached Cadillac, the French governor of Louisiana, inviting cooperation in reestablishing missions in Texas and trade relations overland with Mexico by way of Texas.<sup>17</sup> Acting on this hint, Cadillac sent St. Denis to open a trade route to Mexico. In five canoes the expedition left Mobile in the fall of 1713, and stopped several months at Biloxi. Their route this time was up the Mississippi and Red Rivers to the country of the Natchitoches Indians. Here he left most of his goods with ten men to guard them. Taking thirty Natchitoches Indians St. Denis marched overland to the tribe of the Asirrais where he found the Indians anxious for the return of the Spanish missionaries. Adding the Chief and twenty-five of these Indians to his party he finally reached the Spanish mission of San Juan Beauteista with its fort, about thirty-five miles below the present Eagle Pass. The commandant Don Diego Ramon was glad to see him again and entertained him politely while he sent word to his superiors for instructions. St. Denis improved this time by falling in love with Donna Manuela de Sanchez, granddaughter of Ramon. Finally called to Mexico, he was at first imprisoned, but later



won the friendship of the viceroy and on his return married the beautiful Manuela. His Spanish father-in-law went on with him to Mobile to open trade with the French in horses and cattle. <sup>18</sup>

The Spanish did not publicly endorse this trade but privately connived at it. The priests cooperated because in this way the Texas missions were reestablished, while Spanish officials profited by the trade.

Though European wars caused intervals of ill feeling between the French and Spanish colonists trading in Texas, friendly relations were the rule and by 1720 a good road from Mobile to Mexico ran through Texas. Until 1744 St. Denis, best fitted to carry on relations with the Spaniards because of his tact and Spanish affiliations, remained in charge of Natchitoches, Louisiana, forty miles from the Texas border. The route of St. Denis to Mexico became the first great Texas highway, known to the Spaniards as Camino Real (Kings Highway.) <sup>19</sup> From Nacogdoches, Texas to the mission of San Antonio to the place where it crosses the Rio Grande near Presidio, as the Presidio Road. Scattered along the San Antonio Road the Spanish missions to the Texas Indians were established in 1716-17:

1. San Francisco de les Tejas, reestablished on the Neches River
2. La. Purisirna Concepcion, on the Angelina
3. San Joseph, north of the city of Nacogdoches
4. Nuestra Senora de la Guadelope, on the site where Nacogdoches now stands
5. Nuestra Senora de les Dolores, about where San Augustin, Texas now is
6. San Miguel de los Adaes, within seven leagues of Natchitoches



Commander Ramon called for more settlers and in 1718 the Spanish Governor of Texas, Alacron, built a settlement where St. Denis had crossed the San Antonic River, with a fort, mission and village. The fort was called Presidio San Antonio de Bejar; the mission, San Antonio de Valero. This was the beginning of the present city of San Antonio.<sup>20</sup>

Cordial relations between the Spanish and French were interrupted in 1719 by a war in Europe, and the roads of eastern Texas were deserted, but by 1720 the two nations were friends again. The Spanish commander, Aguayo, sent to reestablish the Texas posts, was met and welcomed at the Neches River, by the ubiquitous St. Denis. To guard the Spanish border, Aguayo built a new fort, Pilar, manned by 100 soldiers, opposite the French fort at Natchitoches, Louisiana.<sup>21</sup>

Finally in 1763 a world war, whose American part was called the French and Indian war ended with England beating the two allies, France and Spain. France gave her possessions west of the Mississippi to Spain. Overland Spanish trade was hampered by bandits, as was maritime commerce by pirates. In 1779 Governor Galvez at New Orleans reported that armed escorts were necessary for overland travel to Mexico due to abandonment of Fort Pilar.<sup>22</sup> The power of Spain was diminishing. In 1791 the last flicker of Spanish missionary activity went to the founding of Refugio, below La Bahia towards the coast.

In 1794 support of the royal treasury was withdrawn from the Texas missions and their lands distributed to the Indians, who were put under regular parish priests.



Although Spanish authority in her colonies was on the decline, trade continued and grew in the face of many difficulties. Before 1800 the overland routes were open from coast to coast through those Spanish regions. Between 1763-97 Spain acquired Louisiana, East and West Florida, the Mississippi Valley and posts in California at San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and San Fernando. On the old roads through this territory, forts were built to keep out traders or other nations.<sup>23</sup> Over these roads Spanish traders drove their pack trains, leaving not only their articles of trade but their language, traditions, religion and culture in the regions through which they passed. Remains of this Spanish colonial empire still are discernible, though the memory of this heritage has been dimmed by the troubles of Texas which became acute by 1800.

Roads which came into most frequent use after the southern regions were occupied were called by the Spaniards Camino Real, merely to signify that they were main routes. Such was the Camino Real which began at St. Augustine, Florida and reached Mexico by way of Natchez and Natchitoches, later finding a short cut from Natchez to Los Angeles and the Pacific coast. Describing links in this route, Meyer, in his Indian Trails of the Southeast wrote: "The traveler would take trails from St. Augustine to Pensacola and Mobile were at peace, he would go to a point on Mobile Bay opposite Mobile. If, however, he desired to avoid Mobile he would take a different trail at Pensacola and follow it and its connections to the junction of the Tombigbee and the Alabama Rivers, where a few miles of travel on another path brought him into the through route. This came



out at the crossing on the Mississippi at Natchez, and from there a trail led up Red River Valley to Natchitoches, Louisiana, and thence in a succession to Nacogdoches and San Antonio, Texas. The Crossing of the Rio Grande was at Presidio and from there the route went finally to the city of Mexico.<sup>24</sup>



## SPANISH ROADS IN FLORIDA

Leaving the seaside town of St. Augustine an old road runs through a tunnel of trees on the first lap of a westward journey of 3,000 miles. In some places ferns grow in the sunken roadbed, but the right of way is free of trees or stumps. Sometimes the old road merges with its lineal descendant, the modern highway, notably where it runs through a Negro settlement inaptly called Glimpse of Glory. Usually it twists and loops around the modern route as if bent on long forgotten business. Finally as it approaches the St. Johns River it breaks definitely with the new road, bound for the nearest narrow crossing. The real westward advance of the trail began with the establishment of missions in central Florida. Although this was due to a sincere desire to convert the heathen, there were other motives also. One was to secure regular food supplies for St. Augustine from tribes under their control and another was to be sure the Indians did not make alliances with the English who pushed their outposts from Charleston (1670) steadily southward. The towns were therefore fortified and the friars were paid the same wages as a Spanish soldier and often led their parishioners in battle. Where the trail crossed the St. Johns River six miles south of Green Cove Springs stood two 40 ft. stone towers, one on each side of the stream, called Fort Picolata and San Francisco de Pupa. These forts built first of wood before 1737, were seized and garrisoned by Oglethorpe in 1740 in the course of his attacks on St. Augustine, but were rebuilt of stone and stood until early American days when our pioneers used the stone for foundations for their houses.



From the St. Johns, the trail dipped south to the vicinity of Gainesville where stood Santa Fe de Tolaco in the Indian province of Potano (later Alachua.) Potano was the old name of this whole middle Florida region, named for a chief who killed a Spanish captain Andrada and nineteen of his men in 1584. The mission of San Francisco de Potano was established by 1606, near Wacahocta, 7½ miles south of Gainesville, and in 1684 it was the object of an attack by heathen Indians of Carolina who burned the mission and carried off the inhabitants to sell as slaves in Carolina. In 1702, Governor Moore of South Carolina raided this mission and took 500 Indian prisoners.

In the vicinity of the present town of O'Brien stood Santa Cruz de Tarihica, with Ajoica near Branford and Santa Catalina de Africa near Hildreth. Beyond these lay Santa Fe de Tolasa and San Juan de Guacara near Dell, San Francisco de Chuquin at Dowling Park and four missions in the vicinity of Madison-Santa Helena de Machaba five miles north of Madison, San Pedro de Potchiriba about 7 miles south of Madison, San Matheo de Tolapotsfi at Greenville, and San Miguel de Asyle at Aucilla. The account of an evening spent in the mission town of Santa Cruz, a few miles north of St. Augustine was published by a Quaker castaway, Jonathan Dickenson, one of the Englishmen who saw Florida in 1699 and got out alive to tell the tale. This was only because there was a temporary truce between the English and Spanish and the Spanish Governor sent him north to his own people.

"We were directed to the Indian warehouse," he wrote. "It was



round, having sixteen squares (sides) and on each square a cabin built and painted, which would hold two people, the house being about 50 ft. in diameter, and in the middle of the top a square opening about 15 ft. probably a vent for smoke. This house was very clean, and fires being made ready near our cabin, the Spanish captain made choice of cabins for him and his soldiers and appointed us our cabins. In this town they

have a friar and a large house to worship in with three bells.<sup>26</sup> Two such bells from missions of middle Florida were recovered from lakes and are now the property of the Florida Historical Society, locked in the basement of the Willow Branch Library in Jacksonville. But to continue with Dickenson's account: "The Indians go as constantly to their devotions at all seasons as any of the Spaniards. Night being come and the time of their devotion over, the friar came in and many of the Indians, both men and women, and they had a dance according to their custom. We had plenty of Cassena drink (brewed from holly tree and drunk very hot.)" Dickenson may not have known it, but he was being honored, as only brave natives and distinguished strangers were given this drink. Boiled corn and peas completed his supper and he slept very comfortably that night.

The Indians submitted to the rule of the Spanish priests who taught the Indian children to read and write and trained their parishioners to regular attendance at church. They could sing the psalms in Latin and came to service well dressed, the men in cloth coats and the women in silk skirts. "They have nothing savage about them but their language." reported the French Governor at Mobile who sheltered part of this nation



after they had been driven from their homes by English raiders from Charleston and their heathen Indians.

The priests taught them to herd cattle, raise sugarcane and oranges and store enough grain to supply themselves and their Spanish masters. Beeswax, honey, dried venison, salted wild turkey, and corn went along the Spanish Trail to St. Augustine by pack train with Indian drivers and so prosperous did these communities become that a regular trade developed with Cuba as well.

One of the points of greatest importance was Fort San Luis, two miles northwest of the present Tallahassee. Here on the old Quincy Road, a haunted hilltop rears its tree-crowned head, the site of Fort San Luis, once the chief fortification on the Spanish Trail between St. Augustine and Pensacola. For generations after its destruction in 1706 it was shunned and feared by the Indians as the camping place of its departed inhabitants.

Though now the visitor would have to search for the small Spanish brick buried on the site, once two large buildings stood here, surrounded by a moat and defended by extensive outworks. The center of the large Spanish and Indian district of Apalache, it was in the center of the granary for St. Augustine, and from here pack ponies went along the trail to supply the garrison at the capital of the east coast district.

This was the oldest and most traveled section of the trail.<sup>27</sup> By 1608 the trail was opened to Apalache, now the region around Tallahassee, and in 1640 Fort San Luis was built there.



Even under priestly rule some of the old social customs of these Indians persisted. Each town had a ball team and games were regularly played between these towns who were not related by blood. The game was a kind of rough Lacrosse, very exhausting and played all day in the blazing sun. All the night before a game the team worked up its spirits with celebrations, and in the morning appeared on the field for a snake dance, each player painted white from head to toe. This costume and the frenzy of the players shocked the priests, who finally stopped the games with an order from Governor Cabrera in 1681.<sup>28</sup>

In 1674 Bishop Calderon of Cuba made a tour of the missions of Florida and described, among others the missions of the Spanish Trail. His trip of inspection was hard and dangerous, and the Bishop felt obliged to employ a company of Spanish soldiers and two of Indians to protect his party. His journeys took 10 months, and eleven thousand dollars were expended for relief of Indians and Whites. As a result of the hardships of his Florida visit the venerable Bishop died in Cuba March 16, 1676.<sup>29</sup>

There were 13,152 Christian Indians in Florida at the time of his visit, and 24 of their settlements extended westward from St. Augustine to Pensacola. He mentions first a mission on the banks of the St. Johns River, San Diego de Salamoco. This stood near the mouth of Six Mile Creek. From there, in his time, stretched 20 uninhabited leagues to the mission of Santa Fe de Toloca. There had been missions in this empty area but in some cases, epidemics had thinned native ranks and in others,



priests had combined villages for better supervision. For example he speaks of the deserted village of San Francisco de Potano. Santa Fe, said Calderon, was the principal mission of the province of Timuqua, and of that area which included most of central and northeast Florida bounded by the Aucilla River.

Santa Helena de Machaba stood northwest of Madison on a lake half way to Hopewell. In 1656 friars and Governor Rebolledo of St. Augustine accused each other of being cause of a revolt of Indians in this area. One of the missionaries risked his life to go to this town and reprove the natives for their action and received the surprising reply that they were not deserting the Christian religion nor their allegiance to the Spanish King, but simply protesting against abuses. Perhaps the first strike on record in the United States.

San Miguel de Asyle probably on the banks of the Aucilla River was the last of the missions of the province of Timucua. Here a royal plantation had been established in 1640. The names of these missions were made up of a saint's name with the name of the Indian tribe or district attached--thus there were two San Franciscos--San Francisco de Potano south of Gainesville, and San Francisco de Chuaquin on the Suwannee River near Dowling Park.

The Timuquan missions of East Florida began to decline after the raid by Yemassee Indians of Georgia, on Santa Catalina in 1684, those of the Apalache region were crushed by Moore's raid in 1704.



For a few years after Calderon, a comparatively peaceful life was pursued in these communities, but dark clouds were gathering in the north which were to overwhelm them. Charleston had grown from a wretched hamlet hardly worth Spanish notice to a powerful Indian trading post whose word was law with the heathen Indians of Carolina and western Georgia and the Chickasaws near the Mississippi River. The reason for this was that the Charleston traders sold rum and firearms to the Indians, which the Spanish steadfastly refused to do. The heathen Indians looked with scorn on the meek Christian Indians of Florida and now and then even a Florida Indian rebelled against the stern Spanish discipline. In 1684 a chief near St. Augustine was punished for disobedience and withdraw to Carolina where he organized an expedition of revenge and burned Santa Calatine Africe near Hildreth and San Francisco de Chuaquin. The mission Indians saved the church vestments and plate but their church was burned and 50 of their people were killed and 22 carried off to be sold as slaves to the Scots at Stuartstown, South Carolina. For this raid the Spaniards destroyed Stuartstown. The famous English trader, Henry Woodward met the raiders and questioned them and they told him the Scots of Stuart Town had sent them on this mission. These slaves were so profitably disposed of in Charleston that other raids were made and finally Governor Moore of Carolina became interested. At dawn, May 20, 1702, Santa Fe mission at Gainesville was attacked at Moore's instigation, English traders leading the Indians against the town, and though a Spanish force pursued them, they got away with most of their booty. The success of this raid led to the great expeditions of Moore against St. Augustine and Apalache. News of the plan caused the



French at Mobile to send military stores to their allies at Pensacola and 100 men (Canadians, Europeans, and Indians) to St. Augustine.<sup>30</sup> Governor Moore himself led the great attack on St. Augustine which failed miserably from a military standpoint and brought him into dis-repute with the people of Charleston. He lost his position as governor, but in 1703, to retrieve his reputation, he organized another expedition, this time against the mission towns of middle Florida. His enemies in Charleston said he did this because his St. Augustine venture had been very profitable as a slave raid and he was looking for new fields. At any rate here is Moore's account of the expedition in his own words:

Colonel Moore's Report of the Apalache Invasion

"On the 14th of December we came to a town and strong and almost regular fort, about sunrising, called Ayaville (San Conception de Ayabule, south of Monticello.) At our first approach the Indians in it fired and shot arrows at us briskly from which we sheltered ourselves under the side of a great mudwalled house, till we could take a view of the fort, and consider the best way of assaulting it; which we concluded to be by breaking the church door, which made a part of the fort, with axes. I no sooner proposed this but my men readily undertook it, ran up to it, the enemy at the same time shooting at them, were beaten off without effecting it, and fourteen white men wounded. Two hours after that we thought fit to attempt the burning of the church which we did, three or four Indians assisting us. The Indians obstinately defended themselves, killed us two men, Francis Plowden and Thomas Dale. After we were in



their fort, the friar, the only white in it, came forth and begged for mercy. In this we took about twenty-six men and fifty-eight women and children. The Indians took about as many more of each sort. The friar told us we killed, in the two storms of the fort, twenty-five men.

"The next morning the captain of St. Lewis' fort (Tallahassee) with twenty-three men and four hundred Indians came to fight us which we did, beat him, took him and eight of his men prisoners, and the Indians say, killed five or six whites. We have a particular account from our Indians of one hundred and sixty-eight Indians taken and killed in fight. Capt. John Bellinger fighting bravely was killed at my foot. Captain Fox died of a wound given him at the first storming of the fort. Two days after, I sent to the cassique of the Ibitachka (who with 130 men was in his strong, well-made fort) in the vicinity of Tallahassee, to come and make his peace with me, the which he did and compounded for it with church's plate, and ten horse loads of provisions. (This was San Lorenzo de Ivitachuco, an Indian town which had a recorded existence of 165 years, and had been visited by De Soto.) After this I marched through five towns which had all strong forts and defenses against small arms. They all submitted and surrendered their forts to me without condition. I have now in my company all the people of three towns and the greatest part of four more. We have totally destroyed all the people of four towns, so that we have left the people of Apalachia but that one town which compounded part of St. Lewis and the people of one town which ran away together. Their town, church, and fort we burnt.--Apalachia is now

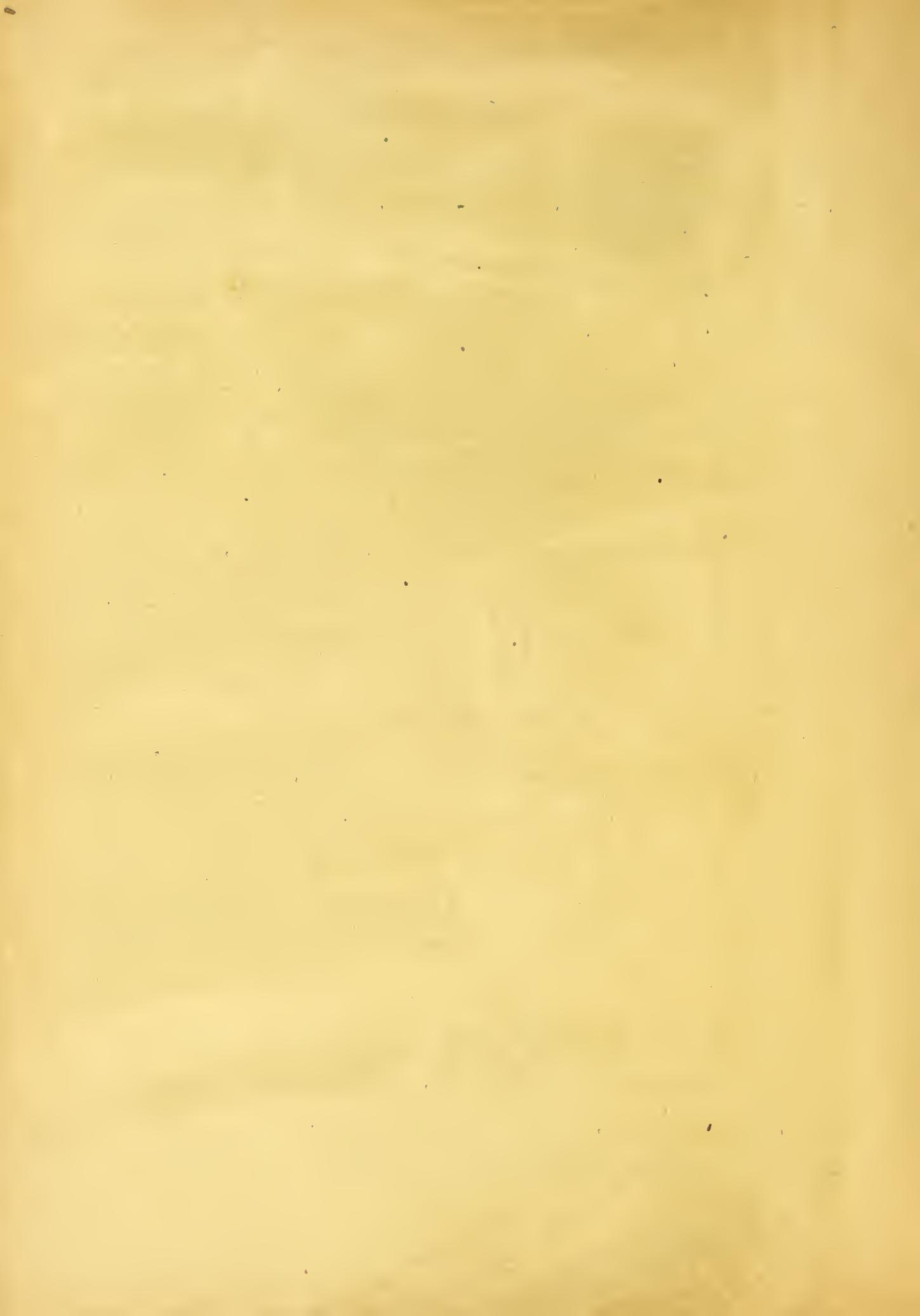


reduced to so feeble and low a condition that it can neither support St. Augustine with provisions, nor frighten us." (Dated in the woods 50 miles north of Apalachia.) Moore was then on his way back to Charleston and out of the present boundaries of Florida, probably at what is now Bainbridge.<sup>31</sup>

The Spanish side of this invasion adds some details. The lieutenant and eight Spaniards and Indians captured by Moore were seized by the heathen Indians under him, tied to the stake, and the Indians burned, while the white men were finally saved by Moore, in exchange for a ransom of four hundred dollars, five cows and five horses. The Indians, exhorted by their priests, sang hymns as they perished, like Christian martyrs. Moore excused himself for this atrocity by saying that his Indian allies became unmanageable but, there is cause to wonder what would have been the fate of the Spaniards if they had not had 400 dollars!

In 1704 Moore was back again with 25 whites and 1,000 Creek Indians. Reinforcements from Pensacola failed to check him. He came down the Flint River, attacked Fort San Luis and defeated the Spaniards under Don Juan Mexiz, who was killed. San Luis was then abandoned and Fort San Marco on the Gulf was built in 1716 to protect the Indians and Spaniards of the region.

The sum total of the disaster according to the French Governor of Mobile was 17 Indians burned at the stake, 3 friars killed or made prisoners, 7,000 Indians and 6,000 head of cattle captured. The rest of the Indians of this region scattered because the Spaniards still would not



arm them. Part went to the French at Mobile, part clustered around a new Spanish fort, San Marco, and part were persuaded by the Yemassee of Carolina to settle there as allies of the English. But it was not long before the Yemassee and Apalachees both regretted their choice. So rich and strong had Charleston become that the better element forgot their Indian friends and the worse element cheated and mistreated them. This policy was condoned because the English wished to drive the Indians westward. Without a sign of their anger, the Yemassee sent word to the Spanish at St. Augustine that they would like to come to Florida. The governor there replied that they would be welcomed, so they sent their women and children south and in 1715 fell upon the Charleston settlements with terrific vengeance. Four hundred whites were killed and only by the most desperate stand were the Indians repulsed. They went to Florida and occupied those towns of the trail which they had once despoiled.<sup>32</sup> So the Apalachees who had gone to Carolina came home once more. The Yemassee revolt and the building of San Marco helped the Spanish cause temporarily. San Mateo, San Pedro, San Frisco, were still on the Mitchell map of 1755, but another series of English attacks finally drove the remnants of the Spanish Indians under the protection of the walls of San Marco on the Gulf and to San Marco at St. Augustine. When England took over Florida in 1763, the Spaniards took many of their own Indians with them to Cuba.

When England secured Florida the King's Highway was built in 1765, connecting St. Augustine and other English towns in Florida with Savannah. A survey of the old St. Augustine-Pensacola road was made in 1778



by the English with a view to establishing a post road. Old routes of travel were easily reopened. Bernard Romans, traveling in West Florida in 1772, wrote, "To make a road--all that seems to be wanting is the blazing of the trees, and the passage of about 100 pack horses--a number not much in excess of what the Traders now bring to Pensacola at one time."<sup>33</sup> Governor Campbell's ship touched at St. Augustine on his way to Pensacola. News of his arrival was dispatched overland<sup>34</sup> from St. Augustine. On January 5, 1781 a letter from Gen. John Campbell was dispatched "by private conveyance" to St. Augustine. Another letter sent January 11th referred to this. Travel over this road did not lapse when the English left Florida in 1784, and the old Spanish settlements around Tallahassee underwent a slight revival, especially at St. Marks on the Gulf, 20 miles south of the present Tallahassee. In American territorial times the Bellamy Road was built, mainly along the old east-west route. Soon many American towns began to grow, especially in northwest Florida, after Tallahassee was selected as the Capitol site. Again St. Augustine was joined with the Tallahassee region, this time by two roads--the Bellamy Road and the more northern road running through Lake City, Live Oak, Madison, and Monticello. The two routes continued to develop until the Civil war when the communities along the Bellamy Road dwindled and side roads up to the northern route became sufficient to meet the needs of the impoverished region.



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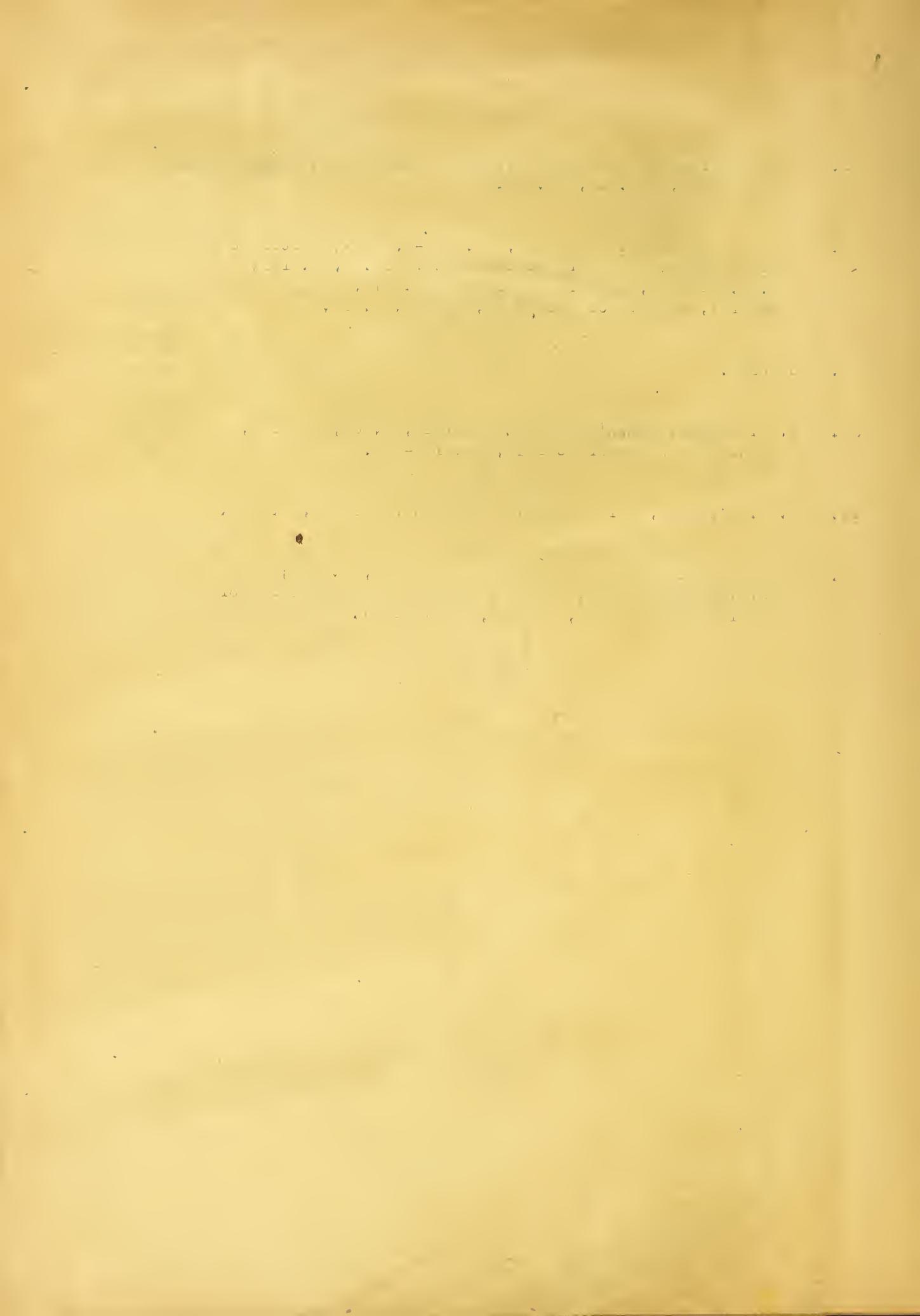
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